necessary to extend the technologies being generated amongst the farmers so that the yield gaps between the planted and ratoon crops could be minimised to the extent possible.

15. The Sugar Development funds have been used to promote research on sugarcane to assist the factories in cane development work. Specific programmes for planting material, treatment for the planting material to produce disease free material could be projectised for funding from the SDF. In this the programme should be developed by the mills and the concerned societies jointly.

16. There have also been suggestions for permitting establishment of vacuum pan factories of even low capacity, *i.e.* the existing khandsari sugar factory also go in for the putting for vacuum pans. Feasibility of permitting this should be examined for taking up this by the Department of Sugar & Edible Oils.

17. At present payment to farmers are made on the basis of weight of cane and not on the sugar content. This discourages farmers from growing varieties of high sugar content. Rapid techniques for assessing sugar content which has been developed with the help of HPCL need to the standarised and perfected.

Uduthorehall Project in Karnataka

*228. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Karnataka Government had requested the Central Government in 1996 for according necessary approval for clearance of forest land to an extent of 183.6 ha. for setting up the Uduthorehall Project, comprising a reservoir in the Cauvery basin in Kollegal Tehsil, Chamrajnagar District, Karnataka, to facilitate irrigation of 6,273 ha. land; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, the reasons for not according clearance so far and the steps, if any, taken to expedite the approval?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BALLU): (a) and (b) A proposal seeking approval of the Ministry under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 183.60 hectare forest land for construction of Uduthorehall Reservoir Project in Kollegal taluk, District Chamrajnagar for irrigating 6277.50 ha. land was received from the Government of Karnataka in December 1994. On scrutiny, the proposal was found incomplete

as per the Ministry's guidelines framed under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The State Government was requested to provide complete details in respect of the proposal in January, 1995. The information was provided by the State Government in August, 1999.

The information provided by the State Government reveals that the project forms part of elephant habitat. The proposal is therefore being examined from the wildlife angle particularly with regard to the impact of the project on the migratory route of the elephants. A Committee has been constituted to inspect the area and submit its report within a month indicating mitigatory measures, if any.

Electrification of Jalandhar-Amritsar Rail Line

†*229. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a decision for electrification of Jalandhar to Amritsar rail line has since been taken;

(b) if so, whether Government have assessed the expenditure to be incurred thereon; and

(c) if so, the details of the expenditure and by when the electrification of the above rail line is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Electrification of Jalandhar-Amritsar rail line is a part of Ludhiana-Amritsar electrification project which has been sanctioned at an estimated cost of Rs. 93.07 crores. The expenditure likely to be incurred upto 31.3.2000 is Rs. 1.80 crores. The above rail line is targeted for completion by March, 2004, subject to availability of funds.

Tobacco-Related Deaths

*230. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated number of tobacco-related deaths during the last four years;

(b) the State and Union Territory-wise break-up of such deaths; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.